September, 2011 Volume 1, Issue 2

Empowering Columbus

Human Rights Commission

Individual Highlights:

Last Story

SPOTLIGHT 2
Inside Story 3
Inside Story 4
Inside Story 5

Though force can protect in emergency, only justice, fairness, consideration and cooperation can finally lead men to the dawn of eternal peace.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

A Thought for Columbus

Facing Reality: Bullying is happening and it could be happening to your children

It takes a Village....

Studies are showing that bullying in our schools is increasing. On average, 10% of our children are currently being bullied. Therefore, out of every 1,000 children, 100 of our children are being bullied. What can each of us, particularly Parents, do about this? Bullying happens over a period of time to a child who is unable to defend him or herself; it might happen physically or verbally, directly or indirectly; either way, it affects the child's formative years. Some educators and parents think that bullying is a way of life, and that it's just as natural as believing in the tooth fairy, unless it develops into something more serious like assault or theft. Well, guess what, those thoughts are wrong. A victim of bullying once said, "When people watch you being bullied and do nothing, that makes you believe that you deserve it".

The psychological damage that can be caused to a child who believes they deserved to be bullied can stay with a child until they become an adult and totally wreck their selfesteem for the rest of their lives. The reality is, we will never be able to rid the world of bullying, but if we watch for the signs we can reduce the number of children that are being bullied in our schools, churches, community centers, parks, sport teams, etc. As parents or care-givers, talk to your children. You may realize that: A) they are being bullied; B) they are doing the bullying, or C) witnessing a fellow classmate being bullied.

You never know until you ask. Once you have asked, take action, and help end this vicious cycle of bullying amongst our children. Don't forget bullying is a form of discrimination and harassment. If we want to create a community that protects its citizens from claims of discrimination, let's not forget our children. Let's face reality, and do something about it! For more information, check out BCSC's Bullying Prevention Brochure

http://www.bcsc.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01000842 /Centricity/ModuleInstance/5294/Bully_Free_ Schools_Brochure_Bullying_Prevention_Task_ Force_for_release_October_2009_v3_Final.pdf

Legal Update –

Trinity Health Corporation Sued by EEOC for Retaliation

INDIANAPOLIS – Trinity Health Corporation violated federal law by retaliating against employees who file or refuse to drop discrimination charges with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency charged in a lawsuit it filed today. Trinity Health is a national Catholic health care system which is the parent of St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, a North Central Indiana health care system.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Trinity
Health has a policy of refusing to pay
severance and/or discontinuing severance
payments to workers who file or refuse to
drop discrimination charges with the EEOC.
The EEOC said Trinity Health refused to
provide severance payments and benefits to
Becky Thompson, an employee of St. Joseph
Regional Medical Center, after learning that
she had filed an EEOC charge. The number
of other workers affected by this practice is
unknown at this time.

Taking adverse actions against an employee who complains of discrimination, files an EEOC charge or otherwise exercises her rights under Title VII or the ADEA violates the retaliation provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA). The EEOC asserts that the company's actions were intentional and demonstrated a reckless indifference to the workers' federally protected rights.

"Employers are simply not entitled to punish employees -- or former employees -- for complaining about discrimination," said Laurie A. Young, regional attorney for the EEOC's Indianapolis District Office. "If they try to do so, they are only making a bad situation worse for themselves."

The EEOC enforces federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. Further information about the EEOC is available on the agency's web site at www.eeoc.gov.

SPOTLIGHT on Welcoming Community



Mayor Fred Armstrong

you're a part of the LGBT community; if you want to be a part of the community you are welcome. This is what I believe, and how I tried to operate as Mayor.

In your years as Mayor, how have you seen diversity in Columbus change? Since I have been in office, Columbus, has gotten better, but there are still closed minded people in the world and even in Columbus, and until they realize the WE is better than I, I think Columbus will make even more strides in the area of diversity.

Based on the Welcoming Community survey, Columbus is more welcoming today than in 2004, what have you done during your administration to ensure that this continues to happen?

It's been a combination of several people working together including the Human Rights commission, and also with the help of the Heritage Fund, our community has made an effort to be more welcoming. As Mayor, it never mattered to me who you were or what you are, everybody is welcomed, no matter your race, sex, religion, or if

As you leave office, what do you see as the future for diversity in Columbus?

Columbus is a unique community. There are companies from all over the world that have decided to make Columbus their home and this will continue to make Columbus more diverse. What's amazing is that in our schools, there are 49 different languages spoken. That really is amazing. You can expect that from a city like Chicago or New York, but in a city of 40,000 to have that much diversity is great for the community.

Since you've been Mayor, there have been changes around Columbus. Change is good. What is one of the most important changes you've seen around Columbus since you've been in office?

The non-Smoking ordinance which benefits cross over to all types of people is one thing that I would like to be remembered for because it saved and will continue to save lives. The fight for the smoking ban was a difficult one. We faced a lot of opposition, and had a lot of support. We ended up having to move the city council meeting to another location, because so many people had opinions or wanted to witness the discussion. I still remember some of the signs that people brought in to the council meeting, because they were so upset with what we were trying to do. But in the end, it was the right thing to

A Few Facts about Mayor Armstrong

Mayor Fred Armstrong is serving his fourth and final term as Mayor of Columbus. When Mayor Armstrong was elected, he brought a little diversity to the office himself, as the first German-Lutheran to ever be elected to that office. He went to Columbus High School, Indiana State University, and Indiana University/Purdue University in Columbus. He served in the United States Army from 1967-1969, and is a veteran of Vietnam, where he earned a Purple Heart and two Bronze Stars. Mayor Armstrong was a Columbus City Police officer from 1969 until his retirement in 1989. In 1992, he was elected to the Columbus City Council, where he served until he was elected Mayor. He is married to Kathi Armstrong, who works for the law firm of Thomasson, Thomasson, and Jackson PC in Columbus. They have two daughters, Shannon and Gretchen, and four granddaughters, Josie, Eleanor (Ellie), Amelia and Harper.





Be Aware. Be Informed. Accommodate







<u>EMPLOYERS</u>

If you have a question or need answers about workplace accommodations or the ADA & related legislation JAN can help. Go to JAN -Job Accommodation Network . At Jan, they "work towards practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee". The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and show employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.

The Children's Hospital
Association Sued By EEOC for
Disability Discrimination

Hospital Refuses to Hire Applicant Due to Fibromyalgia, Federal Agency Charges

DENVER – The Children's Hospital in Colorado intentionally and unlawfully discriminated against an applicant for hire due to her disability, fibromyalgia.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Cecilia McMurray applied for a staff assistant position with the Colorado Children's Healthcare Access Program in Pediatric Medicine. After 3 interviews, McMurray was offered the position of staff assistant II, contingent upon the successful completion of a pre-employment health screen. Following a medical exam by Dr. Henry J. Roth arranged by The Children's Hospital, a human resources

consultant with The Children's Hospital called McMurray and told her that the offer was being withdrawn due to her fibromyalgia. According to Dr. Roth, the only job function of the staff assistant II position that McMurray could not perform was "long periods of sitting and computer/telephone work" because she was restricted to no more than 45 minutes in a static posture. The EEOC contends that The Children's Hospital could have accommodated this restriction and was required to do so under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"This employer could easily have accommodated Ms.

McMurray's disability without disadvantaging anyone," said
EEOC Regional Attorney Mary Jo O'Neill. "The ADA prohibits an
employer from using the results of a pre-employment medical
exam to deny employment to a qualified individual with a disability.
A hospital should especially have understood that. The EEOC will
protect the rights of job applicants who are denied employment for
discriminatory reasons."

EEOC Denver Field Office Director Nancy Sienko added, "The unemployment rate for persons with a disability was 14.8 percent in 2010, well above the figure of 9.4 percent for those with no disability. This nation has committed to making accommodations in the workplace so individuals with disabilities can work and contribute to society."

Further information about the EEOC is available on its website at www.eeoc.gov.

No one ever wants to experience a <u>DISASTER</u>, but if you have a disability or are a senior citizen, you should have a plan for safety. Check out the <u>Disaster Safety & Preparedness Guide for Seniors & People with Disabilities</u> on American Red Cross' Website:

http://www.nyredcross.org/?nd=disaster safety guide for seniors and people with disabilities

Do you KNOW your stuff?

This quiz was created by Social Security's Ticket to Work Program, the full quiz can be taken on:

http://www.facebook.com/choosework?sk=app_1660133767 82265

- 1. What Does the ADA Stand for?
- 2. The ADA defines a person with a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits
 - A. [1 or more major life activities]
 - B. [2 or more major life activities]
 - C. [3 or more major life activities]
 - D. [4 or more major life activities]
- 3. How many people with disabilities are there in the U.S.
 - A. [5 million]
 - B. [50 million]
 - C. [500 million]
 - D. [Less than 1 Million]

- 4. As of 2011, what percentage of people with disabilities is currently in the labor force?
 - A. [Less than 1%]
 - B. [12.2%]
 - C. [21.2%]
 - D. [62.3%]
- 5. The ADA addresses disability issues as it relates to:
 - A. [Employment]
 - B. [Public service, including transportation]
 - C. [Communications/telecommunications]
 - D. [All of the Above]
- 6. When does the ADA expire?
 - A. [Must be renewed every 5 years]
 - B. [Must be renewed every 10 years]
 - C. [Must be renewed every 15 years]
 - D. [No expiration date]
 - Answers are on the last page

your ISSUES matter



According to a list created by Businessweek.com, Indiana ranked in the Top 5 of States for highest incidents of discrimination in the workplace. The list was based on the number of merit resolutions from private, state and local (not federal government) employers.

Indiana is one of the Top 5 states in the U.S. with the Highest Incidence of Workplace Discrimination

The list from businessweek.com noted a few things.

- Despite only being the 15th most populous state, Indiana has a high rate of workplace discrimination, based on merit resolutions.
- Race discrimination was the most common claim in merit resolutions in Indiana, followed by disability and sex discrimination.

The article also noted that in the

fiscal year 2010, there were 99,922 charges, a new record of 20,149 merit resolutions. Among these charges *retaliation* was the charge most often brought.

Check out the whole article by Venessa Wong at:

http://www.businessweek.com/printer/lifestyle/workplace-discrimination-charges-at-record-high-07292011.html

Source: Bloomberg Businessweek

Census data: Same-sex households in Indiana grew by 61% in last decade

BY RICK CALLAHAN, Associated Press INDIANAPOLIS — The number of gay and lesbian households in Indiana jumped 61 percent during the past decade, and about a quarter of those same-sex couples are raising children, new U.S. Census Bureau figures show. The data released Thursday reveal that Indiana had 16,428 households led by same-sex couples in 2010, up from about 10,000 such households counted in the 2000 census.

Census 2010 takers counted 9,409 Indiana households headed by a woman and her female partner and 7,019 households headed by a man and his male partner. Twenty-six percent of those same-sex couples reported that their household includes children they are raising.

Matt Kinghorn, an economic research analyst at the Indiana Business Research Center at Indiana University, said it's unclear if the increase in Indiana's samesex households shown in the census data reflect an actual growth in the number of such households or if same-sex couples are becoming less leery of reporting their relationship status. "There's nothing in the data that will tell

us that," Kinghorn said. "It seems to me there would be some growth but I think a good part of it is a growing willingness to report their status as a same-sex couple because it's becoming more socially acceptable."

Rick Sutton, the president of the gay rights organization Indiana Equality, believes the new numbers reflect both trends. He said more same sex couples are living together in Indiana and those couples are growing less apprehensive about reporting their relationship to the federal agency.

But he said he believes the number of same-sex couples in the state and nationwide remain underreported, in part because some gays and lesbians are worried about what the Census Bureau or others will do with the information. Sutton's group and other advocacy groups for gays and lesbians opposed a state constitutional amendment Indiana lawmakers passed this spring that would ban gay marriage and civil unions in the state. That measure must win legislative approval again in 2013 or face a 2014 statewide referendum in November 2014.

Despite that legislative push, Sutton said

Indiana residents are becoming more tolerant and accepting of same-sex relationships, in part from personally meeting gays and lesbians in their communities open about their sexuality.

The full article can be found:

http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/13543f024f2c42c884d47aeb465b59ac/IN--Census-Indiana/





"Diversity is the one true thing we all have in common. Celebrate it every day." Anonymous

The beauty of children is that they don't need to be reminded about diversity or inclusion, they just get it. Sally and Julio are more concerned with having fun and playing games than being worried about the differences between themselves. But, in reality, one day Sally and Julio will notice the differences: from their sexes, races and heritages, they are different. But everybody is different from someone else. Being comfortable with diversity comes about when we are not afraid to discover our connections and similarities.

Outside the Box: Welcoming Community Tip

Now, let me share a story that most people can relate to if they have siblings: From my birth, I was different, and not just because I was born into a class of a minority. Unlike my brother, I came out the womb, kicking and screaming, and crying, making a heap of noise. It is family legend that my brother, who was only two years old, took me out of my crib (somehow, some way), and was dragging me down the hall before being discovered by our parents.. When my mother grabbed my brother, she asked, "What are you doing to your sister". My brother's response was, "She won't stop crying, can we take her back, please?". My brother was a notorious non-crier. From birth, I was different from my brother and it continues to this day. He's shy, I'm talkative, he's neat, while I, not so much. His favorite ice cream is mint chocolate chip, while the thought of it makes my stomach turn. My mother always celebrated our differences and loved us differently according to our needs. She would always remind us that she loved us both equally; but if it seemed that she treated us differently, she had to, BASED on our differences and different developmental needs and not because she loved us differently.

Now, even though my brother and I are different as night and day, we have one thing in common, besides our parents, and that is our

love for sports. While my brother is more knowledgeable than me about sports in general, on any given day, we can talk about football, basketball, baseball, hockey, golf, and on a really good day you might hear us mention NASCAR or soccer. I think one of our favorite sports experiences was watching the Capitals and the Penguins hash it out on the ice. Neither of us had been to a professional hockey game so we were experiencing it for the first time, but we were experiencing it TOGETHER.

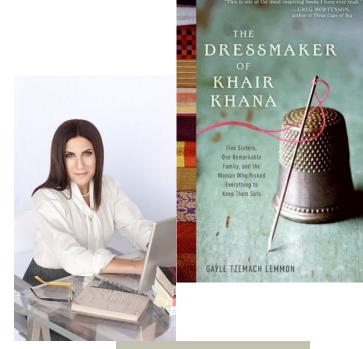
So despite our differences, we share something in common. But that can also be the reality of diversity in the workplace, or in your community. While we will have real differences from others, whether its race, color, religion, disability, sex, or sexual orientation, there are things that connect us all together. Instead of focusing on what makes us different, because in reality we are naturally different, we should explore things that can connect us such as, cooking, music, movies, books, gardening, etc. Invite someone you perceive as different to do something with you that you love, the experience might surprise you.

-Frances L Jordan, Editor-In-Chief-

Book Review: The Dressmaker Of Khair Khana

THE DRESSMAKER OF KHAIR KHANA tells the story of a reallife heroine, a young entrepreneur whose business created jobs and hope for women in her neighborhood during the Taliban years. The story behind the book grew out of a trip to Afghanistan in December 2005 when Tzemach Lemmon was assigned to write a story for The Financial Times and a case for Harvard Business School on Afghan women entrepreneurs. There she met Kamila Sidiqi, an unlikely breadwinner who had become an entrepreneur under the Taliban. Desperate to support her five brothers and sisters at home and banished from Kabul's streets by the Taliban, she started a dressmaking business in her living room which offered work to 100 women in her neighborhood. Together these unsung heroines made the difference between survival and starvation for their families despite—and sometimes because of the Taliban. THE DRESSMAKER OF KHAIR KHANA tells their story for the first time.

Review By: Gayle Tzemach Lemmon from her blog



Mission

To lead Columbus in building and maintaining an inclusive community by:

- Enforcing the Human Rights Ordinance
- 2. Educating the Public
- Challenging attitudes and systems that create barriers to equality
- 4. Empowering community members to advance this mission

Director: Lorraine Smith

Deputy Director: Frances L. Jordan

Secretary: Lula E. Young

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mbusIN_HRC

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gov



Upcoming Events

- 1. Human Rights Commission Meeting: September 28th at 4:30pm in the Common Council Room
- 2. CAMEO (Columbus Area Multi-Ethic Organization) Full Membership Meeting, Center for Learning, Summerville Room, Sept. 14, 6:00pm
- **3. Ethnic Expo**: October 8th and 9th, The Expo will be set along 1st Street and Washington Street
- **4. CAMEO Film Festival:** October 10th at Yes Cinema at 6:00pm. The African American Association is featuring the film "Pressure Cooker"
- 5. Diversity Roundtable of Central Indiana, 13th Annual Diversity Conference, Indianapolis, Sept. 16. To register, http://www.drtci.org/page/Conference_event
- 6. The Power of Diversity, Equal Employment and Fair Housing Workshops, Friday, September 23, 2011, 1:00pm- 4:00pm (Free) and Defending Summary Judgment in Employment Discrimination Cases, Friday, September 23, 2011, 10:00 am-12:00 pm 2.0 CLE Credits. Costs \$50, register at http://www.in.gov/icrc, Bloomington City Hall, Council Chambers. 401 North Morton Street, 47404 7. The Repercussions of Bullying on Girls' Futures, 1st Bullying Prevention Task Force Mtg., Sept. 23 7:30a.m. at BCSC Admin Bldg.

